

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 STATE 179044
ORIGIN AF-03

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EUR-03 /007 R

66011
DRAFTED BY:AF/W:JHLEWIS
APPROVED BY:AF/W:TWMSMITH
-----038574 150707Z /14
O 150508Z JUL 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
INFO AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG IMMEDIATE 9442

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 179044

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY MOOSE

FOLLOWING REPEAT NOUAKC 1945 ACTION SECSTATE INFO ALGIERS,
BAMAKO, BRUSSELS, CAIRO, DAKAR, JIDDA, MADRID, PARIS,
RABAT, TRIPOLI, USUN NY, AND VAIHINGEN GERMANY DATED JULY 14, 1978.

QUOTE: C O N F I D E N T I A L NOUAKCHOTT 1945

CINCEUR FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: LJS
TAGS: PINT, MR
SUBJ: COUP D'ETAT IN MAURITANIA: FURTHER ACCOUNT OF NEW REGIMES FIRST
DEMARCHE

REF: A. NOUAKCHOTT 1906 (NOTAL), B. NOUAKCHOTT 1923 (NOTAL)

1. IN ADDITION TO THE ITEMS REPORTED IN REFTELS, MY JULY 12
CONVERSATIONS WITH ISMAEL OULD AMAR AND CHEIF OF STATE
MOUSTAPHA OULD MOHAMED SALECK ELICITED THE FOLLOWING OPINIONS,
EXPLANATIONS AND INSIGHTS.

2. OULD DADDAH: ACCORDING TO AMAR, NO ONE BUT OULD DADDAH
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 STATE 179044

IS BEING HELD RESPONSIBLE FOR THE MISMANAGEMENT OF MAURITANIA.
IN RECENT MONTHS, HE CHOSE TO ISOLATE HIMSELF FROM REALITY.
HE WAS UNWILLING TO TAKE ADVICE FROM ANYONE EXCEPT HIS WIFE.
EVEN AHMED OULD MOHAMED SALAH (WHO ACTED AS HEAD OF
STATE IN OULD DADDAH'S ABSENCE) DID NOT HAVE THE PRESIDENT'S
EAR, MUCH LESS FORMER FONMIN MOUKNASS. IT IS PROBABLY
REFLECTIVE OF THE NEW REGIME'S DISDAIN FOR MRS. OULD DADDAH

AND HER PROGRESSIVE ORIENTATION THAT AMAR REPEATEDLY REFERRED TO HER BY HER ORIGINAL CHRISTIAN NAME MARIE THERESE IN SPITE OF HER MUCH PUBLICIZED CONVERSION TO ISLAM AND ADOPTION OF THE NAME MIRIAM. BECAUSE OF HER INFLUENCE OULD DADDAH PLACED TOO MUCH IMPORTANCE ON THE DEMANDS OF RELATIVELY FEW AND UNREPRESENTATIVE PRESSURE GROUPS SUCH AS LEFT WING YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS. HE OPINED THAT QUOTE OULD DADDAH WAS NOT OF THIS AGE END QUOTE AND THAT HE EITHER REFUSED OR WAS INCAPABLE OF DEALING WITH ECONOMIC PROBLEMS.

3. REPRISALS: AMAR VOLUNTEERED THAT THERE WAS NO CURRENT INTENTION TO HOLD PUBLIC TRIALS NOR WAS THE NEW REGIME INTERESTED IN REPRISALS (FYI - WE HAVE LEARNED THAT SERIOUS CONSIDERATION IS BEING GIVEN TO CONFISCATING REAL PROPERTY HOLDINGS AND ANY OTHER AVAILABLE ASSETS OF FORMER MINISTERS IN OULD DADDAH'S CABINET). AMAR STATED THAT NONE OF THE MINISTERS IS BEHIND BARS. RATHER THEY ARE UNDER HOUSE ARREST AND MOST WILL BE FREE TO GO ABOUT THEIR BUSINESS WITHIN DAYS. OULD DADDAH HIMSELF WILL NOT BE HARMED AND WILL BE RELEASED AS SOON AS THE NEW DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS ARE INSTALLED. HE WILL BE FREE TO REMAIN IN MAURITANIA UNMOLESTED. MRS. OULD DADDAH WILL NOT BE WELCOME.

4. CIVIL SERVICE: THE CAREER BUREAUCRACY WILL REMAIN INTACT. REGIONAL DELEGATES (FORMERLY CALLED GOVERNORS) OF THE THIRTEEN GEOGRAPHIC REGIONS HAVE NOT BEEN REPLACED, CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 STATE 179044

HOWEVER, THEIR FORMER COORDINATOR ALI CHERIF, THE FORMER SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE PRESIDENCY IS STILL UNDER HOUSE ARREST AND WILL NOT BE RETAINED IN THE CIVIL SERVICE. THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY WILL REMAIN HOWEVER.

5. INTERIM GOVERNMENT: THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT COMPRISES THREE ELEMENTS:
A) THE MILITARY COMMITTEE OF THIRTEEN OFFICERS (SEE NOUAKCHOK 1883);
B) THE COMMITTEE OF TWENTY-TWO MADE UP OF BUSINESSMEN, FORMER POLITICAL FIGURES AND PROFESSIONALS, ALL OF WHOM ARE CONSERVATIVE PROPONENTS OF PRIVATE ENTERPRISE; AND
C) THE CABINET.
AT THE MOMENT, AT LEAST, IT APPEARS THAT THE COMMITTEE OF TWENTY-TWO IS THE DOMINANT GROUP BUT THIS COULD CHANGE AS THE MILITARY BECOME ACCUSTOMED TO POWER.

6. STEPS TOWARDS NEW DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS: WITHIN A FEW DAYS THE COMMITTEE WILL EXPANDED TO A FIFTY OR SO AMTAR CONSULTATIVE ASSEMBLY WHICH WILL THEORETICALLY REPRESENT ALL ELEMENTS OF SOCIETY. THE ASSEMBLY'S FIRST ORDER OF BUSINESS WILL BE TO DRAFT NEW CONSTITUTION AND ESTABLISH THE MEANS OF

HOLDING FREE ELECTIONS UNDER A MULTI-PARTY SYSTEM. NO DECREE OR LAW CAN BE PUT INTO EFFECT WITHOUT THE ASSEMBLY'S RATIFICATION. TIMING OF ANY ELECTIONS WILL DEPEND UPON HOW SOON THE VOTING LISTS CAN BE BROUGHT UP TO DATE.

7. ECONOMIC POLICY: AMAR SAID THAT MAURITANIANS ARE MERCHANTS BY TRADITION. SOCIALISM IS FOREIGN TO THEM. THE FIRST STEP OF THE NEW GOVERNMENT WILL BE TO ESTABLISH AN ECONOMIC POLICY AND INVESTMENT CODE BASED ON THE FREE ENTERPRISE SYSTEM WITH A MINIMUM OF GOVERNMENT CONTROL. FOREIGN PARTICIPATION WILL BE INVITED.

8. CURRENT FINANCIAL SITUATION: AMAR DESCRIBED FINANCIAL SITUATION AS CATASTROPHIC BUT THAT BUDGET COULD BE BALANCED
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 STATE 179044

IF OUTSTANDING DEBT COULD BE RESTRUCTURED. CURRENT DEBT SERVICE RUNS TO US DOLS. 50 MILLION PER ANNUM WHICH IS BEYOND MAURITANIA'S CAPACITY. THE WORLD BANK RECENTLY ESTIMATED THAT RESTRUCTURING THE DEBT WOULD REQUIRE A NEW LOAN OF US DOLS. 200 MILLION. AMAR STATED THAT IN ADDITION TO THE MONEY ITSELF. MAURITANIA NEEDS TECHNICAL EXPERTISE TO HELP PUT ITS FINANCIAL HOUSE IN ORDER. KRYZA UNQUOTE CHRISTOPHER

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: GOVERNMENT OVERTHROW, DEMARCHE, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 15 jul 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE179044
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: AF/W:JHLEWIS
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780290-0661
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780755/aaaabukb.tel
Line Count: 143
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 67048072-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 NOUAKCHOTT 1906, 78 NOUAKCHOTT 1923
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 28 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1993615
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: COUP D'ETAT IN MAURITANIA: FURTHER ACCOUNT OF NEW REGIMES FIRST DEMARCHE
TAGS: PINT, MR, US
To: LUXEMBOURG
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/67048072-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014